

REMARKS

Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 1 and 14 will have been amended and claims 20 and 21 will have been canceled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections together with an indication of the allowability of all of the claims in the present application, in due course.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2-4, 6, 22 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 61-292242 in view of JP 63-213137 and Europe 706178. In addition, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-4, 6, 14, 16, and 22-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Europe 706178 in view of JP 61-292242, JP 63-213137 and at least one of JP 4-57234 and JP 62-124629. Further, claims 2, 7-8, and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Europe 706178 in view of JP 61-292242, JP 63-213137 and at least one of JP 4-57234 and JP 62-124629 and in further view of JP 4-139630.

Applicants respectfully traverse each of the above-mentioned rejections and submit that they are inappropriate for at least each of the reasons that were previously submitted.

Although Applicants do not agree with the rejections set forth by the Examiner, Applicants have nevertheless amended the claims to substantially incorporate the subject matter of objected-to claims 20 and 21 into claims 1 and 14 merely to expedite prosecution of the present application.

In addition to the previously asserted reasons for patentability, Applicants submit that all of the claims pending in the present application are allowable, as admitted by the Examiner, at least since each of the applied references fail to disclose or suggest, a laminated optical disc manufacturing apparatus comprising, inter alia, a cylinder coupled to each contact pin and configured to retractably extend in the radial direction in accordance with operation of the air source, as recited in the claims.

Further, each of the applied references fail to disclose or suggest, a laminated optical disc manufacturing method comprising, inter alia, coupling a cylinder to each contact pin and retractably extending the cylinder in the radial direction in accordance with operation of the air source, as recited in the claims. Accordingly, as the applied references, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose the combination of features recited in the claims, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections together with an indication of the allowability of all pending claims.

Further, Applicants note the status of the present application as being after final rejection and with respect to such status believes that there is a clear basis for entry of the present amendment consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.116. Applicants note that the amendments made to the pending claims do not raise any new issues requiring further search or consideration, as claims 1 and 14 have merely been amended to incorporate the subject matter of examined and objected-to claims 20-21 therein. It is also submitted that the present amendment does not raise the question of new matter. Moreover, the present

amendment clearly places the present application in condition for allowance, at least due to the Examiner's indication in the outstanding Official Action.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of the present amendment in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, and an indication of the allowability of all claims pending herein.

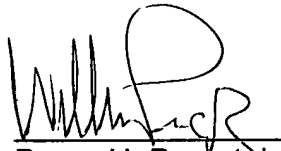
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request an indication to that effect. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims pending therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Any amendments to the claims, which have been made in this amendment and which have not been made to overcome the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability. Accordingly, no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
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